in North Sikkim, Destination Development of Geetang Khola waterfall including Heliport in West Sikkim and Development of Tourist Infrastructure under Berfung-Ralong Constituency including Heliport at Chemchey in South Sikkim. However, no Heliport has been sanctioned in Himachal Pradesh so far.

Tourism concerns due to security

2427. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has slipped down to 23rd world ranking in terms of forex earning from tourism despite higher number of arrivals;

(b) whether security concerned intensified by the Mumbai terrorist attacks have made India an unattractive proposition for the foreign tourists; and

(c) if so, the initiatives taken by Government along with airlines, hotels and tour operators to minimize the impact of slowdown on India's tourism sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED): (a) to (c) There was a growth in foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs), as well as foreign exchange earnings (FEE), from tourism in India in 2008 over 2007. However, the growth rates in FTAs and FEE from tourism during 2008 over 2007 were lower as compared to those observed during 2007 over 2006. The rank of India in FEE from tourism was 23rd in 2008 as compared to 22nd in 2007.

The estimated number of FTAs in India during January-November 2009 declined by 6.3% as compared to the corresponding period of 2008. This decline in FTAs may be due to various reasons including global financial slowdown, terrorist activities, H1N1 pandemic, etc.

Ministry of Tourism (MOT) has launched "Visit India 2009" Scheme in April 2009 in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel to India.

In addition, to increase the number of FTAs, Ministry of Tourism, through its India tourism offices overseas is undertaking a series of promotional activities. These activities include, advertising, participation in travel fairs, exhibitions, road shows, India evenings, seminars and workshops, Indian food and cultural festivals, publication of brochures, inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality Programme of the Ministry.

Capital subsidy to Hotels

†2428. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government of India had published a notification dated 7th December, 2007 to provide capital subsidy to one, two and three star hotels under modified scheme of incentives to accommodation infrastructure in budget hotels;

(b) whether the duration of this scheme was only upto 31st March, 2008;

(c) whether this scheme was only applicable to the hotels getting star status after completion of the construction work within the duration of this scheme or it was also applicable to those who applied for getting star status after completion of construction work;

(d) the details of the beneficiaries thereof;

(e) whether Government will provide grant to those also who have applied for star status but waiting to get the approval; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (f) Yes, Sir. The Scheme was applicable to hotels of one to three star and Heritage (Basic) categories all over the country as per notification of 7th December, 2007. To be eligible under this scheme, it was a mandatory requirement that the hotel be commissioned and classified by the Ministry of Tourism during the period 01.04.2004 to 31.3.2008.

Water Augmentation Scheme in Raipur

†2429. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether around 50 per cent of Central grant is yet to be released for the Water Augmentation Scheme in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh;

(b) the details of plan for its disposal; and

(c) whether a proposal for Telibandha reservoir has also been received; if so, by when it will be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SAUGATA RAY): (a) and (b) The project titled "Raipur Augmentation Water Supply Scheme" has been approved for a cost of Rs.303.64 crore with Additional Central Assistance (ACA) commitment of Rs.242.91 crore. So far an amount of Rs.182.18 crore has been released *i.e.* 75% of the ACA committed. The second subsequent installments of Additional Central Assistance (ACA) for projects are released only upon receipt of proper utilization certificate from State Governments. The Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) before releasing the second and subsequent installments of ACA satisfies itself as regards the physical and financial progress of the projects under implementation and achievement of milestones as agreed upon by the States and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for implementation of reforms.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.